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FM AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0071
INFO RUEHWH/WESTERN HEMISPHERIC AFFAIRS DIPL POSTS IMMEDIATE
RUEAHND/COMJTF-B SOTO CANO HO IMMEDIATE
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC IMMEDIATE
RUEHUB/USINT HAVANA IMMEDIATE 0213
RUMIAAA/CDR USSOUTHCOM MIAMI FL IMMEDIATE
RUEAHND/CDRJTFB SOTO CANO HO IMMEDIATE
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC IMMEDIATE
RULGPSU/COMSOC SOUTH IMMEDIATE
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE
RUEIDN/DNI WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE
RUEHLMC/MILLENNIUM CHALLENGE CORP WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE 1085
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC IMMEDIATE
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC IMMEDIATE
RUMIAAA/USSOUTHCOM MIAMI FL IMMEDIATE

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 TEGUCIGALPA 000564

SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

STATE FOR WHA/CEN

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [CASC](#) [MARR](#) [KDEM](#) [PHUM](#) [HO](#) [ASEC](#)
SUBJECT: HONDURAS COUP SITREP #14 07/08/2009 AS OF 1500
LOCAL (1700 EDT)

REF: A. TEGUCIGALPA 555
[1](#)B. AND PREVIOUS

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Fewer Demonstrations Today

[1](#)1. (U) Zelaya supporters reportedly planned today to block traffic entering Tegucigalpa coming from the direction of Danli. As of 1000 local (1200 EDT), approximately 4,000 protesters had gathered near the highway exit to Danli at a shopping center, "Villas del Sol." As of 1320 local (1520 EDT), the demonstration had dispersed peacefully. This demonstration confirms pro-Zelaya demonstrators, statements on Tuesday of plans to change their strategy and move their activity out of Tegucigalpa and onto the highways, though on a smaller scale than was predicted. The Consular Section is contacting its wardens to request information on any known road blocks throughout country.

[1](#)2. (U) Graffiti continues to appear throughout Tegucigalpa. Following yesterday's pro-Zelaya march near the Embassy, ten separate statements were found spray painted within a half-block radius of the Embassy. All graffiti appeared to be pro-Zelaya and against Micheletti and Cardinal Rodriguez Maradiaga. Only one line of graffiti found near the Embassy mentioned the United States (Ref A). These acts of vandalism appear all over the city and can be found along the protest routes of these groups. No other acts of vandalism or violence were reported as of 1100 local (1300 EDT).

[1](#)3. (SBU) The curfew for tonight is from 22:30 to 04:30 local (00:30 to 06:30 EDT). Honduran National Police (HNP) report that 159 arrests were made on Tuesday night, July 7, for curfew violations.

Political Developments; Public Opinion

¶4. (U) The de facto regime's Foreign Minister, Enrique Ortiz Colindres, publicly apologized on Tuesday for using racial slurs to refer to President Obama on June 29 (Ref A). In a letter read by Ortiz, he asked forgiveness for his callous remarks and insisted he meant no disrespect. This public apology followed the Ambassador's strong condemnation of Ortiz's comments in the local press on Tuesday. Contacts in communication with the de facto regime report to Post there are plans to remove Ortiz and appoint former National Party Foreign Minister Carlos Lopez Contreras in his place in one week, but this has not been confirmed.

¶5. (U) Reports indicate that public schools continue to suffer from absent teachers due to their participation in pro-Zelaya demonstrations. Parents and national parent-teacher associations are publicly calling for the cancellation of the present school year and suspension of teacher pay. This comes at the heels of an announcement by the de facto regime of plans to continue with a scheduled USD 7.5 million bonus to teachers.

¶6. President Zelaya has nominated his Private Secretary, Enrique Reina, to serve as his Ambassador to the U.S. On July 8, Reina, who had been in hiding in a private residence in Tegucigalpa successfully traveled to El Salvador. He plans to travel to Washington tomorrow, July 9.

Infrastructure and Communications

¶7. (U) Toncontin Airport is open and operating as of Tuesday
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afternoon, July 7. Airlines state they plan to return to normal operations at Toncontin, with most airlines resuming normal operations by Saturday July 11. San Pedro Sula airport remains open for international flights, and American, Continental and Delta airlines continue to operate flights as usual to and from that destination. All land borders are reportedly open to both private and commercial traffic.

¶8. (U) As of Wednesday morning, there are no/no reports of abnormal public utility outages in the country.

Consular and Embassy Operations

¶9. (SBU) Until commercial flights at Toncontin Airport have fully resumed, the Embassy's Management Office continues to support official air travel via San Pedro Sula and provide over land transportation to Tegucigalpa.

¶10. (U) The Embassy is open for all regular consular services today, July 8. Barring a change in the security situation, the consular section plans to be open for regular consular services until further notice.

¶11. (U) The Consular Section has received welfare and whereabouts inquiries on more than 650 Amcits to date via telephone and email. Post issued a new warden message last night and barring any major changes in the security situation, plans to issue a final one this afternoon, which will direct American citizens to the Embassy website for updates.

¶12. (SBU) Post held an EAC at 1400 local time (1600 EDT), reviewing post's security posture and reviewing civil unrest tripwires. Post will hold its next EAC on Friday, July 10.
LLORENS